

CHAPTER 2

JUDE

Authorship and date of Jude

v. 1, Jude, servant of Jesus Christ, brother of James

- Greek Ἰούδας *Ioudas*, “Judas”; taken from tribal name of tribe of Judah
- Matt 13:55 = Mark 6:3, Judas, brother of Jesus and James (named third and fourth, thus younger)
- Not an apostle (v. 17)
- As James, not a believer at first, but by Pentecost (John 7:5; Acts 1:14)
- Probably married and a missionary (1 Cor 9:5)
- According to Hegesippus (quoted by Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3:19-20 [*NPNF*/2, 1:148-49]), two of Jude’s grandsons were questioned by Domitian (A.D. 81-96) and released, and were subsequently leaders in the church

Critical scholarship generally has assumed Jude to be a pseudepigraphal work, written about A.D. 100 (Kümmel, pp. 428-29). It is argued that his language is better than a Galilean’s would be, that the generation of apostles is past (v. 17), and that he is combating a form of antinomian Gnosticism which was more common at the end of the century.

These critical arguments are answered well by Bauckham (*WBC*, pp. 13-16). He shows that the book arises from a first century Palestinian background, and that Jude the brother of James is the likely author.

Bauckham dates Jude in the 50s, assuming it was written before 2 Peter. Mayor dates the book close to A.D. 80 (p. cxlv). Within that range, the dating will depend on the question whether Jude depends on 2 Peter (dating Jude late 60s or beyond), or whether 2 Peter depends on

Jude (dating Jude late 60s or earlier). Comparison of the two letters seems to favor 2 Peter using Jude, which would agree with the earlier date for Jude, in the 50s or 60s.

Occasion and audience

Time of apostasy, false teachers threatening the church

Primarily libertine, or antinomian

Audience generally Christians in general (v. 1)

Mayor limits to same audience as earlier epistle of James

Points of interest

- v. 3, Motto of American Council of Christian Churches (and of East Africa Christian Alliance), “Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (cf. Portugese “luta,” “fight”)

- Contrast between two groups:

“Dear friends” (KJV, “beloved”)—vv. 3, 17, 20

“Certain men, these men, these”—vv. 4, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 19

- Need to remind readers of necessity of contending:

vv. 3, 5, 17

- Note on Jude’s use of the Pseudepigrapha

There are three different pseudepigraphical texts claiming to be the testimony of Enoch:

- *1 Enoch*—Ethiopic (composed & compiled 2nd B.C. – 1st A.D.)
- *2 Enoch*—Slavonic (late 1st A.D.)
- *3 Enoch*—Hebrew (5th-6th A.D.)

Several passages of *1 Enoch* have similarities to Jude. The *Testament of Moses*, or its cognate document, the *Assumption of Moses*, is dated about the first century A.D.

1. Jude 6, similar to *1 En.* 6-19 (the fall of the “Watchers”)

E.g., *1 En.* 10:4-6, “And secondly the Lord said to Raphael, ‘Bind Azaz’el hand and foot (and) throw him into the darkness!’ And he made a hole in the desert which was in Duda’el and cast him there; he threw on top of him rugged and sharp rocks. And he covered his face in order that he may not see light; and in order that he may be sent into the fire on the great day of judgment.” (*OTP* 1:17)

[*OTP* = *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. by James H. Charlesworth (2 vols.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1983)]

Also *1 En.* 10:12-13, “And when they and all their children have battled with each other, and when they have seen the destruction of their beloved ones, bind them for seventy generations underneath the rocks of the ground until the day of their judgment and of their consummation, until the eternal judgment is concluded. In those days they will lead them into the bottom of the fire—and in torment—in the prison (where) they will be locked up forever.” (*OTP* 1:18)

2. Jude 9, apparently refers to lost ending of *Testament of Moses*

For evidence of what would have been in this ending, or for other possible sources, see Bauckham, pp. 65-76. To balance this view, note comments of J. Priest in *OTP* 1:924, “That the episode was contained in the lost ending of the *Testament of Moses* or in a cognate work, properly called the *Assumption of Moses*, is possible; but our present information does not warrant any positive conclusion. . . . The possibility exists that some New Testament authors were familiar with the *Testament of Moses*, but it would be better to say that both the *Testament of Moses* and certain New Testament texts show familiarity with common traditional material.” [cf. also Zech 3:1-2]

Zech 3:1-2, Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. The LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?”

3. Jude 12-13, similar to *1 En.* 80:6-7

“Many of the chiefs of the stars shall make errors in respect to the orders given to them; they shall change their courses and functions and not appear during the seasons which have been prescribed for them. All the orders of the stars shall harden (in disposition) against the sinners and the conscience of those that dwell upon the earth. They (the stars) shall err against them (the sinners); and modify all their courses. Then they (the sinners) shall err against them (the stars) to be gods.” (*OTP* 1:59)

4. Jude 14-15, quotes *I En.* 1:9 (only formal quotation in Jude)

“Behold, he will arrive with ten million of the holy ones in order to execute judgment upon all. He will destroy the wicked ones and censure all flesh on account of everything that they have done, that which the sinners and the wicked ones committed against him.” (OTP 1:13-14)

5. Jude 16, similar to *T. Mos.* 5:5

“For those who are the leaders, their teachers, in those times will become admirers of avaricious persons, accepting (polluted) offerings, and they will sell justice by accepting bribes.” (OTP 1:929)

Note that in the parallel sections in 2 Peter, these works are not quoted. The events referred to apparently are true and historical, but preserved outside of the OT. Quotation of a source does not imply that the author believes the source to be canonical; compare Paul’s use of non-canonical literature in Acts 17:28 and Titus 1:12-13.

Acts 17:28, “For in him we live and move and have our being.” As some of your own poets have said, “We are his offspring.” (quoting Aratus, *Phaenomena* 5)

Titus 1:12-13, Even one of their own prophets has said, “Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons.” This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith (quoting Epimenides, *de Oraculis*)

Outline of Jude

1) Greeting, vv. 1-2

2) Warning against ungodly men, vv. 3-19

a) Need to contend, vv. 3-4

“Contend” (“fight”)

“The faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints”

“the Faith” = doctrinal content; cf. 1 Cor 15:1-7

“Entrusted” = “delivered”; παραδίδομι *paradidomi*

Marks of ungodly men:

Grace becomes license for immorality

Deny Jesus Christ as Sovereign (δεσπότης *despotes*) and Lord

Slipped in secretly

Designated before for condemnation (not NIV; good translation in NKJV and Net Bible)

b) Examples of unbelief and immorality, leading to God's judgment, vv. 5-7

Cf. 2 Pet 2:4-8 (fallen angels, sinners in Noah's time; Sodom and Gomorrah)

v. 5, Jews in the wilderness

v. 6, Fallen angels

v. 7, Sodom and Gomorrah

c) Example against the sin of arrogance, vv. 8-10

vv. 8-9, Michael and the devil

Michael named in Dan 10:13; 12:1

Is this from *Testament of Moses*? See notes pp. 2-3; general statement in 2 Pet 2:11

2 Pet 2:11, yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord.

v. 10, Men compared to unreasoning animals, actually ignorant of spiritual realm (similar to 2 Pet. 2:11)

d) Examples of covetousness, leading to judgment, v. 11

Cain

Gen 4:1-16; guilty of covetousness, jealousy, hatred, murder; and his condemnation

Balaam

Num. 22-24; guilty of greed (disguised at first, evident in Deut 23:4-5; Neh 13:2); and incited Moabites to get the Midianite women to lead the Hebrews into immorality (Num 31:16); he was condemned and killed (Num 31:8)

“Error of Balaam”

Jude 11

“Way of Balaam”

2 Pet 2:15

“Teaching of Balaam”

Rev 2:14

Korah

Num 16; 26:9-11; Ps 106:16-18; desire for usurping God’s leadership will lead to their ruin

e) Comparisons of ungodly men, vv. 12-13

Blemishes

“Your love feasts” (ἀγάπη *agape*), apparently the meal eaten together before the communion; perhaps the communion itself

False shepherds

Waterless clouds

Dead trees

Wild waves

Wandering stars

f) Men of evil speech, vv. 14-16

Quotation from *1 Enoch* (see above)

Enoch apparently was surrounded by ungodly men, who may even have wished him harm; he was rescued by God (Gen 5:21-24; Heb 11:5).

These men will be judged (vv. 14-15)

g) The apostolic warning, vv. 17-19

For apostolic warnings, cf. Acts 13:41 (quoting Hab 1:5); 20:29-30; 2 Tim 3:1-5

Probably refers to apostles who founded the churches to which he was writing (cf. Eph. 3:5)

Similar to 2 Peter 3:3

3) Exhortations for the faithful, vv. 20-23

vv. 20-21, Attitude toward oneself

vv. 22-23, Attitude toward others affected by the ungodly

Note textual variant in v. 22:

UBS selects “have mercy on” rather than “refute” with a {C} rating (ἐλεᾶτε *eleate* or ἐλεεῖτε *eleeite*, as opposed to ἐλέγχετε *elegchete*); also, the KJV following later MSS has “making a difference” rather than the better text “those who doubt” (TR διακρινόμενοι *diakrinomenoi*, UBS διακρινομένουσ *diakrinomenous*).

4) Closing doxology, vv. 24-25

God is able to keep us from falling; cf. Jude 1, “kept by Jesus Christ.”